

**PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE
IN HIGH ACHIEVING
AND LOW ACHIEVING SCHOOLS**

**A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science (Management),
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

by

Hamidah binti Naina

(c) Hamidah binti Naina, 19%. All rights reserved



**Sekolah Siswazah
(Graduate School)
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

**PERAKUAN KERJA TESIS
(Certification Of Thesis Work)**

Kami, yang bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(We, the undersigned, certify that)

HAMIDAH BT. NAINA

calon untuk ijazah
(candidate for the degree of) Sarjana Sains (Pengurusan)

telah mengemukakan tesisnya yang bertajuk
(has presented his/her thesis of the following title)

Perceived Organisational Culture in High Achieving and Low
Achieving Schools.

seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit tesis
(as it appears on the title page and front cover of thesis)

bahawa tesis tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan, dan meliputi
bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan.
(that the thesis is acceptable in form and content, and that a satisfactory knowledge of the
field is covered by the thesis).

AJK Tesis
(Thesis Committee)

Nama
(Name) Prof. Dr. Milandre B. Rusgal
(Penyelia Utama/Principal Supervisor)

Tandatangan
(Signature) 

Nama
(Name) Cik Adika Shiraz Ahmed

Tandatangan
(Signature) 

Nama
(Name) _____

Tandatangan
(Signature) _____

Tarikh
(Date) _____

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Post Graduate degree from **Universiti Utara** Malaysia, I agree that the **Library** of this University may make it **freely** available for inspection. I **further** agree that **permission** for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for **scholarly purposes** maybe granted by my super&or(s) or, in their absence, by the Dean of the Graduate **School where I did my thesis. It is understood that any copying or publication** or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written **permission**. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and Universiti Utara Malaysia for any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my thesis. Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of materials in this thesis, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

Dean of Graduate School
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menyelidik dan membanding budaya organisasi di antara tiga buah sekolah menengah berprestasi tinggi dan tiga buah sekolah menengah berprestasi rendah di daerah Kulim Bandar Baharu, Kedah di dalam konteks budaya kualiti yang dicadangkan oleh Pekeliling Kemajuan Pentadbiran Awam (PKPA) bagi sektor Perkhidmatan Awam. Tujuh prinsip kualiti iaitu sokongan pengurusan atasan terhadap kualiti; perancangan kualiti berstrategi; mengutamakan pelanggan; latihan dan pengiktirafan; semangat berpasukan; pengukuran prestasi; dan kepastian kualiti telah dikaji. Selain itu kajian ini juga menyediakan jawapan bagi soalan-soalan berikut: (1) Adakah sekolah-sekolah berprestasi tinggi berbeza secara signifikan daripada sekolah-sekolah berprestasi rendah di dalam budaya kualiti dari segi ketujuh-tujuh prinsip ini secara bersendirian atau bersama? (2) Apakah faktor-faktor sekolah dan guru yang dapat menjelaskan secara signifikan variasi di dalam budaya kualiti?

Unit analisis terdiri daripada tiga buah sekolah berprestasi tinggi dan tiga buah sekolah berprestasi rendah di dalam daerah Kulim Bandar Baharu. Klasifikasi sekolah adalah berdasarkan kepada pencapaian sekolah dalam peperiksaan Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 1995. Sekolah-sekolah berprestasi tinggi terdiri daripada tiga buah sekolah teratas manakala sekolah-sekolah berprestasi rendah terdiri daripada tiga buah sekolah terendah. Data dikumpul daripada 182 orang guru. Satu borang soal selidik yang dibina sendiri terdiri daripada 106-item telah digunakan. Instrumen kajian telah diuji untuk menentukan kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan. Kedua-dua statistik deskriptif dan inferens telah digunakan bagi menganalisis data. Khususnya, ujian-t digunakan untuk menentukan perbezaan di antara kedua-dua kumpulan sekolah, Analisa Regresi

Berbilang digunakan untuk menentukan kekuatan, arah dan signifikans perhubungan di antara budaya kualiti dan faktor-faktor sekolah dan guru manakala 'Stepwise Regression' telah digunakan untuk menentukan prediktor terbaik budaya kualiti. Aras keyakinan 0.05 telah digwtakan sebagai paras kritikal bagi membuat keputusan berhubung dengan hipotesis.

Kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa sekolah-sekolah berprestasi tinggi berbeza secara signifikan dari sekolah-sekolah berprestasi rendah di dalam budaya kualiti secara keseluruhannya. Khususnya, terdapat perbezaan signifikan di dalam sokongan pengurusan atasan terhadap kualiti; semangat berpasukan dan kepastian kualiti di mana sekolah-sekolah berprestasi tinggi telah menunjukkan tahap budaya kualiti yang lebih t i n g g i . Sokongan pengurusan atasan berbeza secara signifikan dari segi tahap pengetahuan pengetua tentang prinsip-prinsip Pengurusan Kualiti Menyeluruh (TQM), penyampaian keperluan terkini Pekeliling Kemajuan Pentadbiran A w a m (PKPA) dan penempatan guru-guru dalam kumpulan bagi peningkatan diri. Semangat berpasukan berbeza secara signifikan dari segi pengetahuan guru tentang kerja berpasukan dan penglibatan guru-guru dalam pasukan manakala kepastian kualiti berbeza secara signifikan dalam fokus terhadap polisi, undang-undang dan peraturan; dan kualiti penyampaian servis.

Dapatan-dapatan ini mempunyai implikasi terhadap pembentukan polisi dan program, penyediaan peluang-peluang, penyampaian maklumat serta pendedahan kepada program budaya kualiti bagi sekolah-sekolah di luar bandar. Dapatan bahawa hanya 24% daripada varians budaya kualiti diterangkan oleh faktor-faktor yang dikaji memberi cabaran kepada penyelidik-penyelidik untuk meneroka faktor-faktor lain yang mungkin mempunyai hubungan dengan budaya kualiti di sekolah. Dapatan bahawa tahap budaya kualiti adalah

lebih tinggi di sekolah gred A yang baru ditubuhkan yang terletak di kawasan bandar memberi implikasi kepada Kementerian dari segi penyediaan peluang-peluang dalam program-program dan polisi kepada sekolah lama di luar bandar.

Dapatan dari kajian ini hanya boleh digeneralisasikan di dalam Daerah Kulim Bandar Baharu tetapi rangkakerjanya boleh direplikasikan bagi kajian-kajian lanjutan.

ABSTRACT

This study attempted to investigate and compare **organisational** culture! of three high achieving and three low achieving **secondary** schools in the district of **Kulim Bandar Baharu, Kedah** in the context of quality **culture** as recommended by the *Pekeliling Kemajuan Pentadbiran Awam (PKPA)* or the **Development Administrative Circulars (DAC)** for the Public Services sector. seven quality **principles** were examined along top management support; long-term strategic plan on quality; customer focus; training and recognition; team spirit (*esprit de corps*); performance measurement and quality assurance. Specifically, this study sought to provide answers to the following questions : (1) Will high achieving schools differ significantly from low achieving schools in quality culture along these principles, jointly or singly ? (2) what school and teacher factors will significantly explain the variance in quality culture ?

Three high achieving schools and three low achieving schools in the Kuhn Education District served as the unit of analysis for the data generated. The classification of schools was based on the school performance in the 1995 *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)* results. The top three performers constituted the high achieving school group while the three bottom performing schools constituted the low achieving schools. Data were collected from 182 secondary school teachers. A 106 item self constructed questionnaire was used which was pilot tested for validity and reliability. Both descriptive

and **inferential** statistics were used for data analysis. **Specifically**, the t-test was used to determine **differences** between the two groups of schools, Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the strength, direction and significance of the relationship between quality culture and school and teacher factors while **Stepwise** Regression Analysis was used to **determine** the **best** predictor for **quality** culture. The 0.05 level of significance was set *a priori* for decisions about the null hypotheses.

The study revealed that high achieving schools differ **significantly** from low achieving schools in overall quality culture. Most **specifically**, **sign&ant** differences were observed for top management support, team spirit and quality assurance biased in favour of high achieving schools which generally tend to exhibit higher levels of **quality** culture. More **specifically**, top management support **differs significantly** in terms of the levels of knowledgeability of TQM principles, updating the **staff** with the requirements of the DACs and in the organisation of the staff into groups for self improvement programs. Team spirit **differs significantly** in terms of teachers knowledge about teamwork and involvement of teachers in teams while **quality** assurance **differ** significantly in terms of focus on policies, rules and **regulations** and the quality of delivery of services.

These findings bear implications to policy makers and program developers **specifically** in the provision of **opportunities** for rural based schools for **quality** culture information and exposure to **quality** culture programs. The

findings that only 24 % in the variance for quality culture was significantly explained by the factors investigated open challenges to research- to explore other factors which might impact on quality culture in schools. The findings that higher quality culture appears to be biased in favour of newly established grade A schools located in urban or more developed areas bear implications to the Ministry in terms of providing opportunities for the attainment of programs and formulation of policies to older schools located in rural areas.

The findings of this study are generalizable to the Education District of Kulimbut the framework maybe replicated for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful. I thank You.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor Professor Dr. Milandre 'Nini' B. Rusgal for her constructive ideas, criticisms, patience and commitment in guiding and assisting me throughout the duration of preparing this thesis. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Miss Adika Shiraz Ahmed for her advice and encouragement.

I am also indebted to Dr. Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid, the Director of Institute Aminuddin Baki whose vision gave me the chance to pursue this study. Thanks are also due to the Government of Malaysia for granting the scholarship and study leave.

Special thanks are extended to Kulim District Education Officer, principals and teachers of the secondary schools under study for their invaluable help during data collection.

To all members of Cohort 3 and my lecturers, I sincerely appreciate the supportive climate for studying and their help and guidance during the course of the study.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and affection to my husband Mohamad and children Syarafi, Sabrina and Syazana for their

prayers, patience, love, support, encouragement and sacrifices during the period of this challenging work.

And above all, to Almighty God, Allah S.W.T., for all his blessings on me and my family.

Hamidah Naina.

DEDICATION

**I take a great deal of pride in dedicating this
thesis to my beloved husband,
Mohamad b. Hj. Abdullah
Your love, support and understanding
made this work possible.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Permission to use.....	i
Abstrak	ii
Abstract.	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Dedication.	x
Table of Contents	xi
Lists of Tables	xiii
Lists of Figures	xiv
 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.1 Context of the Study.....	1
1.2 Research Objectives.....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	4
1.4 Research Hypotheses.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.7 Delimitations of the Study.....	7
 CHAPTER 2 : CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	 8
2.1 Review of Literature.....	8
2.1.1 Organisational Culture and Total Quality Managemen t.	8
2.1.2 Elements of Quality Culture..	9
2.1.3 Studies on Organisational Culture.....	11
2.2 The Research Model.....	13
2.3 Defhition of Terms.....	14
2.3.1 Conceptual Dehitions.....	14
2.3.2 Operational Definitions.....	15
 CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	 23
3.1 Type of Study.....	23
3.2 Sources of Data.....	23
3.3 Population.	23
3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques.....	24
3.5 The Respondents.....	25
3.6 Data Collection Techniques.....	27
3.6.1 The Ins-t.....	27
3.6.2 Data Collection Procedures..	28
3.6.3 Pilot Test.....	28
3.7 Data Analysis Techniques.....	31
3.7.1 Method of Analysis.....	31
3.7.2 Criteria for Decisions.....	32

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	34
4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Findings.....	34
4.1.1 Quality culture.....	34
4.1.2 Top Management Support.....	36
4.1.3 Strategic Quality Planning.....	38
4.1.4 Customer Focus.....	42
4.1.5 Training and Recognition.....	46
4.1.6 Esprit de Corps / Team spirit.	49
4.1.7 Performance Measurement / criteria	52
4.1.8 Quality Assurance.....	55
4.2 Correlates of Quality Culture.....	59
 CHAPTER 5:SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	 63
5.1 summary.....	63
5.2 Conclusions.....	65
5.3 Recommendations	72
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 74
APPENDICES	77
Appendix A - Questionnaire.....	77
Appendix B - Correspondence.....	94

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1:	Distribution of Population and Sample.....	24
Table 3.2 :	Distribution of Respondents According to Schools.....	25
Table 3.3 :	Distribution of Respondents by Gender, age, Race, Marital Status, and Education Level.....*	26
Table 3.4 :	Distribution of Questionnaire Items.....	29
Table 3.5 :	Reliability Coefficient of Questionnaire Items	30
Table 3.6 :	Statistical Tools for Data Analysis	31
Table 3.7 :	Decision Rules to Determine Strengths of Relationships...	32
Table 3.8 :	Decision Criteria to Determine Levels of Quality Culture.	33
Table 4.1:	Mean, S. D., t-value and p for Quality Culture.....	35
Table 4.2 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Top Management Support..	37
Table 4.3 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Strategic Quality Planning..	39
Table 4.4 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Customer Focus	44
Table 4.5 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Training and Recognition...	48
Table 4.6 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Team Spirit.	51
Table 4.7 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Performance Measurement	54
Table 4.8 :	Mean, S.D., t-value and p for Quality Assurance..	57
Table 4.9 :	Regression Coefficients for Quality Culture	60
Table 4.10 :	Stepwise Multiple Regression for Quality Culture	61

List of **Figures**

Figure 2.1: Schematic Diagram Showing the Relationship Among Quality Culture, School Factors and Teacher Factors.....	13
--	-----------

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the study

The study attempted to investigate and compare organisational cultures of high achieving and low achieving secondary schools in the District of Kulim Bandar Baharu, Kedah. Organisational culture in this study specifically refers to “Quality Culture” as enunciated by the *Pekeliling Kemajuan Pentadbiran Awam (PKPA) or the Development Administrative Circulars (DAC)* for the Public Service Sectors, series of 1992 which include educational institutions. Seven principles of quality were investigated along :

- (1) top management support;
- (2) long term strategic plan on quality;
- (3) customer focus;
- (4) training and recognition;
- (5) team spirit (esprit de corps);
- (6) performance measurement and;
- (7) quality assurance

The contents of
the thesis is for
internal user
only

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Al-Khalaf,A.M. (1994). "Factors that Affect the Success and Failure of TQM Implementation in Small united states cities." *Dissertation presented to University of Pittsburgh.*
- Allen,R.F.; Kraft,C. (1982). **The Organizational Unconscious.** New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Arogyaswamy,B; Byles C.M. (1987). "Organisational Culture : Internal and External Fits." **Journal of Management.** Vol.13., No. 4. pp 647-659.
- Beach, L.R (1993). **Making The Right Decision : Organizational Culture, Vision, and Planning.** New Jersey : Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Berry,G. (1996). "Leadership and The Development of Quality Culture in Schools." *Paper presented at the Eighth Regional and International Conference of the Commonwealth Council on Educational Administration, K. L., Malaysia.*
- Bonstingl,J.J. (1992). "The Quality Revolution in Educatim." **Educational Lead-hip Journal.**
- Brown,M.G. (1994). "Measuring Up Against the 1995 Baldrige Criteria." **Journal for Quality and Participation.** Vol.17. No. 7. pp.66-72.
- Clott,C.B. (1995). "Predictors of Organizational Effectiveness in Schools of Bushess." *Dissertation presented to University of Illinois at Chicago.*
- Denison,D.R. (1 9 9 0) . **Corporate Culture a n d Organisational Effectiveness.** New York : John Wiley and Suns.
- Development **Administrative Circular.** (1992).
- Galloway,I.D. (1990). "Strategic Management in Public Sector Research Organisations : A Critical Review." **The International Journal of Public Sector Management.** Vol.3 No.1-3.
- Gordon,J.R. (1991). **A Diagnostic Approach to Organizational Behavior.** Boston : Allyn and Bacon.

- Jones,R.M. (1992). **"Organisational Culture of Three High Performance School in British Columbia."** *Dissertation presented to University of Victoria (Canada).*
- Kinnear,E.L. (1994). **"A Comparison of the perceptions of Teachers Regarding Organisational Culture in High Achieving and Low Achieving Elementary Schools in California (Shared Vision)."** *Dissertation presented to University of La Verne,*
- Mc.Cullough,P.M. (1988). **"Development and Validation of an Instrument to Measure Adherence to Deming's Philosophy of Quality Improvement."** *Dissertation presented to the University of Tennessee,*
- Norusis,M. J. (1988). **SPSS/PC+ Studentware.** Chicago : SPSS Inc.
- Poston,W.K. (1994). **" Comprehensive Study of Factors Impacting Perceived Quality in School Organisations."** *Paper presented at the Eighth Regional and International Conference of the Commonwealth Council on Educational Administration, K.L., Malaysia.*
- Rigsby,K.L. (1994). **"Total Quality Management and the Culture of a Model Elementary School : A Case Study."** *Dissertation presented to University of South Florida.*
- Robbins,S.P. (1991). **Organizational Behavior.**New Jersey : Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Robinson,P. (1993). **"Beyond JSO 9000 : A Practical Strategy for Total Quality."** **Bulletin Kualiti dan Standard.** Vol.3 No.1.
- Robey,D. (1991). **Designing Organisations.** (3rd ed). Boston : hwin Inc.
- Rosenbaum,S.M. (1988). **"The Organizational Culture of Two Academically Dissimilar Elementary Schools."** *Dissertation presented to Hofstra University.*
- Sarji,A.H. (1993). **Malaysia's Vision 2020.** Selangor : Pelanduk Publications.
- Scarlett,L.M. (1994). **"The Development of Organisational Culture : A Case Study of the 1992-1993 Golden Bears Hockey Team."** *Dissertation presented to University of Alberta.*

- Schermehorn, J.R. (1996). *Management*. (5th ed). New York : John Wiley and sons, Inc.
- Schultz, M. (1995). *On Studying Organizational Culture : Diagnosis and Understanding*. New York : De Gruyter.
- Sekaran, U. (1992). *Research Methods for Business : A Skill Building Approach*. (2nd ed). New York : John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Shader, K.K. (1990). "An Investigation of the Possible Impact of Training and Organisational Culture on Technical Employee Job Performance." *Dissertation presented to the Florida State University*.
- Shaw, W.P. (1990). "The Organisational Cultures and Principals Leadership Behaviors in Three Academically Dissimilar Middle Schools." *Dissertation presented Texas A & M University*.
- Sohal, A.S. (1994). "Managing Service Quality : Developing a Vision and a Strategy." *Total Quality Management Journal*. Vol.5. No. 6.
- Taylor, T.E. (1991). "Development of a Valid and Reliable School Culture Audit (Culture Gaps)." *Dissertation presented to Iowa State University*.
- Turner, D. (1994). "Redesigning the Service Organisation." *Journal for Quality and participation*. Vol.17. No. 4.
- Vandenberghe, R.; Staessens, K. (1991). "Vision as a Core Component in School Culture. Symposium : Professional Culture in Schools : Types and Processes." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the America Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Waldman, D.A. (1994). "Designing Performance Management Systems for Total Quality Implementation." *Journal of Organisational Change Management*. Vol.7. No. 2.
- Wheatley, V. (1993). "The Relationship Between School Quality and Student Achievement in Selected Elementary Schools in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands." *Dissertation presented to University of Miami*.